

NYPL RESEARCH LIBRARIES



3 3433 08044574 9

(Bramara.)

1 GE

AN
A D D R E S S ,

IN COMMEMORATION OF
THE SIXTH OF SEPTEMBER, 1781.

SPOKEN ON

GROTON HEIGHTS.

SEPT. 6, 1825.

—o—
BY WILLIAM F. BRAINARD.

NEW-LONDON:

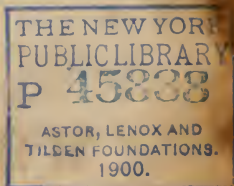
PRINTED UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE COMMITTEE.

1825. .

Checked

Ms. 12

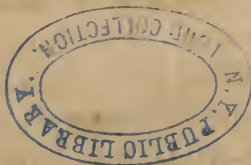
165



New-London, September 6th, 1825.

We, the subscribers, a committee appointed for this purpose, present you the thanks of the audience assembled on Groton Heights, the 6th of September, 1825, for the excellent and appropriate oration by you delivered, and request a copy for publication.

ELIAS PERKINS,	}	<i>Committee.</i>
S. F. DENISON,		
JAMES MITCHEL,		



ADDRESS, &c.

THERE is a tendency in our nature, to venerate what is ancient, and to wonder at what is distant. This leads us to pry into the concerns of antiquity, searching after statesmen and heroes, who, through the mist of the distance, loom up into geniuses and giants. It leads us to explore climates and countries, which we paint the more fancifully, the further they are off. The Fortunate Islands are places in the west; but whereabouts in point of longitude, has never been discovered. With respect to any event in history, wherein individuals are said to have signalized themselves, by personal prowess, the older the event, and the more remote the place, we believe with more credulity, and admire with more astonishment. Those who fought at Thebes and Illium were "joined with auxilliar Gods;" and as the story goes, were, sometimes, more than a match for them. Those who first ventured on the water, under Jason,

to explore their way from the straits of the Dardanelles, to the Black Sea, were regarded as heroes, by the crew of Columbus ; and the crew of Columbus were venerated, in their turn, by the sailors of Cooke and Parry.—Bold was the man who first ventured on the sea : Yet how many, from this very region under our eye, are in the habit of daring its perils. How many, from this spot, have explored the world ; how many, have met the shock of the Iceberg, or been shipwrecked on the shore, or have sickened and died, in foreign climates, or have been drowned in the ocean ! A single instance is selected out of many.

JOHN LEDYARD *the traveller*, was a native of this place. If ever a national tale should be written in this country, by a competent hand, John Ledyard the traveller, must be one of its characters. The enthusiasm of that man, and the freedom, with which he subjected a great constitution to bodily suffering, would put into shade all the heroes of Scottish romance. In him, as far as concerned their wanderings, was concentrated the whole spirit of the pilgrims, with the enduring perseverance of the martyrs, and the enterprize of Columbus. He walked the Arctic Circle, till the strangeness of his journey, which encouraged neither stages nor turnpikes,

and which none but an enthusiast could understand, alarmed the rude inhabitants of Eastern Russia, who stopped him, and banished him, and that on pain of death if he returned, because they could not comprehend the philosophy of his travels. This man, besides many other voyages, sailed with Cook round the world; and was with him when he was killed at Owyhee. His greatest sufferings were in his Russian travels, where, destitute and on foot, he went from Bothnia to Siberia, six thousand miles. He died at Cairo in Egypt, in the service of the African Association. This man was no boaster, and his sufferings never got the better of his spirit. His remark on this subject was characteristic of him; "I am accustomed" said he, to the African Association, when they were examining his qualifications, "I am accustomed to hardships; I have known hunger and nakedness, to the utmost extremity of human suffering. I have known what it is to have my food given me as charity to a madman; and been, at times, obliged to shelter myself under the miseries of that character, to avoid heavier calamity. My distresses have been greater than I have ever owned, or ever will own, to any man. They have never deterred me from my purpose." But it is not intended to give biographical sketches.

There is another tendency in our nature, a tendency to *exaggerate*, to tell what we have seen, not exactly as we saw it; and what we heard, not exactly as we heard it; and to relate, by way of narrative, when no special solemnity binds us, matters of fact, not exactly as they were. We repeat a tale, with a little help of our own, so that as it goes from mouth to mouth, it seldom ends in a story less strange than the original. Under this disposition to exaggerate and misrepresent, *this Country* has been, on the whole, a sufferer. Our English friends, who write histories, travels, and reviews, about us, have not, as far as my reading extends, spoken "*to things as they are*," they say that man and beast degenerate here: and that, in the face of the whale, that spouts on both sides of this continent—the sea serpent that visits our shore, and the bones of the mammoth; to say nothing of certain occurrences by sea and land.

They boast of their ancestry; they trace their descent from Goths, and Vandals, and Picts, and Huns, and Barbarians of every name. They appropriate all antiquity to themselves: and their history *is* more ancient than ours. We claim to be descended from civilized men; who brought with them all the arts and sciences and civilization of England, and who nearly stripped

it of its religion. The ancestry of this Country, that we boast of, was of two sorts, those who suffered for their religion, and those who fought for their liberty. They tell us of *degeneracy* ! What have we degenerated *from* ? Many of them profess to believe, as we do, in the doctrine of total depravity.—They would add to this the doctrine of a *degeneracy* in human nature, which is constantly progressing ; which makes their own condition, by this time, by no means *enviable* : add to this, that every thing in this country is, and always has been, on a scale still smaller than in Europe, and what miserable wretches must we be ! “ Say not why the former days were better than these, for thou dost not inquire wisely concerning this.” This New Country, to be sure, is little indebted to the *ancients*, but it is still less indebted to those *modern* nations in Europe, which have been cotemporary with it, since it was discovered.

The truth is, the Old World has abused the New, from the first. They abused him who discovered it—they abused the natives that they found here ; and say what they will, they have done nothing for it, through all its latitudes. They have visited us with injuries, and we have repaid them with benefits. In a commercial view, they will not deny this. How long did the

lazy Spaniard expect the annual return of the Plate fleet? How long that the South American Colonist was to waste his life in coining Dollars for him?

And in North America, particularly in New England, it should be distinctly understood, that the Pilgrims did not come as *colonists*; they did not come at the public expense, or under patronage and protection; they were not assisted and fitted out, they were *compelled* to renounce; and came here for *safety*; not under a *governor* as a colony, but under a *clergyman* as a persecuted congregation. They never meant to own a dependance on the British crown. 'Twas not right they should. Why, when they grew strong, were they hunted up in the wilderness, to be arrayed against the French in Canada? Was it of these men, or the descendants of these men, that the stupid ministers of Geo. III. expected that they should pay off their National Debt? These strange protectors of ours, did for us, what? They taxed us, worked us, fought us, and belied us; and it is an evidence of loyalty to this day to abuse us.

Do we owe them any thing? either in honor, in gratitude, or in money?

Let the accounts be audited,—they need charge us nothing for their antiquity, their an-

cestry, their rights, hereditary and divine ; their dynasties, alliances, and legitimacies—we never had the articles. They may charge us with *persecution*, and call it *protection*—with the levies of *our own men*, and call it the defence *of the colonies* ; with *taxes*, and call it *government* ; with *war*, and call it discipline ; with *abuse*, and call it *instruction*. If the balance *be* against us, we are fast paying it off ; and fast growing able to pay the remainder ; *we are getting fast out of debt*.

Europe has felt the influence of the New World, and is feeling it more and more. The next revolution there (and they will have another,) will be unlike the last one ; it will be milder in its progress, and happier in its end.

I have mentioned a tendency to magnify things ancient, and things foreign ; under the impulse of these forces, united, the one urging and the other beckoning, we should all of us set out on our travels, and keep on to the end of our pilgrimage.

But there is another, and a stronger tendency, the love *of country, and of home*.—He who created the planets, gave them a projectile motion, that would have sent them into regions of heat and cold, to finish their destinies, God knows where ; but He added a countervailing force, that drew them to the centre of their motion.

Thus have the wandering propensities of *our* nature been brought to anchor, by a feeling more intense than they. It is the love of our native country ; it is more, it is a partiality, in that country even, for the spot where we were born, and the scenes with which our youth, and perhaps our lives, have been conversant. Our friendship may vary its object, or even turn to enmity ; our love may fade into indifference, or flutter with inconstancy ; but our attachment to the beauties of that natural scenery, to which the eye has been habituated, increases with age, and is strengthened by distance. Most men, who emigrate, and all who journey on the deep, let their fancy suggest whatever prospect it may, of wealth, honor, or pleasure, paint a still brighter picture in the back ground of the whole, and place, in long perspective, the prospect of their return. A return, not to the friends of their childhood, for they will be scattered ; not to the beauties of their youthful love, for they will be faded ; but to these permanent objects, which will assert, and vindicate their control over the affections, as long as there is a dweller upon earth.

There is no spot, however unpromising to a common eye, but can excite these feelings in one who is a native of it ; but if it be marked with sublimity, or beauty, these feelings will be yet more

strong : and stronger still, if to these be added, traditions, and recollections of great events, and high achievements, connected with it. For while we regard it with affection, we regard it with pride *too*.

The place where we stand is a beautiful spot ; the traveller may pause here ; the painter may stop here ; the lover of nature may linger here ; and the native born may dwell here.

This is the spot whose moonlight beauty fed the young enthusiasm of Ledyard the traveller ; and it was never forgotten by him, in all his wanderings, nor when he died in Egypt. Here are united the water and the land ; the river, the sound, and the ocean ; the beach of sand, and the shore of rocks, the islands and the main ; this consecrated height on which we are ; and the hills, plains, and woods in the distance ; the whole prospect varying with every change of season, and every shift of wind : sometimes, still in the summer's evening, when the image of the moon in the water does not tremble with the wind, sometimes, marked with the perils of the winter's storm.

Such a spot, no light inducement should compel us to abandon. Migrate if you will to the Western Country, and settle on a Savannah, or a Prairie, rich with the deposits of vegetable cor-

ruption that is constantly going on, and filled with gases, that gender pestilence; sigh for the breeze fresh from the ocean, that your infant lungs were made to breathe—you will never find a spot like this! And if it need further endearment to bind you to it, as your home, *this spot is not without its history.*

In the Calender of human events, which began with creation, and is swelling with the progress of time, there is one of the loose leaves, that must not be lost. It is a leaf, illuminated on its margin with pestilence and war, with a conflagration in that town and a massacre in this; it is illustrated with a chart, as accurate as the laws of nature; and it is adorned with that beautiful picture which I have already explained.

This leaf it shall be my endeavour to read.—And *you* who are natives of this region, you who are actuated by the kind feelings, and local partialities that have been mentioned, you who are proud of the recollections which associate themselves with all the objects about you, you who regard this place with feelings of noble enthusiasm, and religious veneration, as the one where the call on *you*, is strongest to adore Him, who in the beginning created the heavens and the earth. *You* are my appropriate hearers, and my indulgent audience.

Who trod this spot before the Deluge, when there were Giants in the Earth? How did it look when the waters subsided? How long, through the long solitude that followed the devastation of Almighty wrath, how long, did it remain without an inhabitant? without a bird to sing in the air, or a creeping thing to worm along its surface; how long, without a man, who might have wandered hither from his tribe?

From the days of the Patriarchs, to the journey of their descendants in the wilderness; from the hunting days of Nimrod, through all the eastern empires, to the date of European history, through their ages of fable, and their ages of darkness, to which they recur in tracing their genealogies from their barbarous northern ancestors, while they tell how Christianity prevailed by degrees, over their Scandinavian Mythology, where was this country? where, during their chivalry, and crusades? Guessed at by the wise, predicted by the sanguine, on no better ground, than that there must be something on this side of the world, to balance the land on that; but as much unknown, and as little believed in, as that hollow world that remains for discovery.

The great adventurer came—the needle, whose new discovered magic he had trusted, trembled and varied in the binnacle, and threat-

ened to deceive his trust ; his crew mutinied about him. There was one glorious moment in his life, when the man at the mast head cried *Land !* But as soon as the new world was discovered, it was laid open to the avarice of the old ; as Paradise was to the visitation of Satan and his followers from hell. The bridge was built, the passage was open, to Pizarro and his Spaniards, Drake and his pirates, Raleigh and his desperadoes. Some were tempted hither from the worst of passions, some were driven here for the worst of crimes.

Still, New England was unknown. It was settled by those, who were banished hither, by the same impulse of religious persecution, and united in the same cause. These men, and such as shortly followed them and settled in Connecticut, have since passed under the general name of the Pilgrims. They had their *object in view*, and they achieved it *here* ; the great work of civil and religious freedom. How has it spread ? It was deep politics *once*, to talk of the balance of power in Europe ; we may now talk *larger* ; of a balance of power through the *world*. This vast Continent of freedom, so long oppressed and persecuted, has faced to the *right about*.—Now it looks on Europe, and affects her politics, her alliances, and her wars. Greeks and

Turks know us now ; the northern ridge of Africa, from the pillars of Hercules, to the place where Carthage stood, knows us now. The Russian, the Austrian, the Dane, and the Swede refer in their treaties to the disposition of America. Britain respects us, Spain fears us, France wonders at us, and Ireland adores us with tears.

And why should they not ? The old world is not *yet* rid of its feudal system, and its restraints upon conscience. Charter is extorted after charter, shackle is broken after shackle, and one link of their chains, after another, is filed away with the awkward instruments that their ingenuity devises. Here, Christians of all denominations have harmonized for a century, while the British Parliament still agitates the Catholic Question. Our light, which was once hid under a bushel, is now placed upon a candlestick.

I have been naturally led to the concerns of this *Continent*. Mindful of our design, let us return to the history of this *spot*. It was always inhabited by warlike men. The most powerful tribe of Indians in New England, and the most reluctant to surrender, were the Pequots ; they conquered the surrounding tribes, and made them tributary ; they restrained the Mohawks on the west, and the Naragansetts on the east ; they fought the European settlers in the west-

ern parts of this State ; but their favorite residence was in the southern towns of this county. These brave men have left their history to be told by their enemies. The forces of this infant settlement, with some friendly Indians, who had seceded from the tribe, fought with them that decisive battle where Mason commanded, on the high ground to the east, which is just shut from our view by an intervening hill.

Let whatever historian say to the contrary, they were brave men ; there is something in the country that serves to form the character of the inhabitants.

Uncas, with his tribe of Mohegans, who were of Pequot descent, adhered ever to the cause of the settlers.

There is this much to be said in favor of the Government of Connecticut in regard to its treatment of such remnants of the Indian tribes as have remained among us : there is a partial provision made for their support, but not enough, they were a silent but a noble people ; and God forbid that they should be exterminated. Exterminated ! for what ? You are arraying all your charities to civilize the heathen, the Lord knows where, whose wretchedness comes to you through the long alembic of a missionary report, in terms to flatter your piety, without shocking your

nerves ; while the poor, the ragged, and may be the drunken Indian is turned from your door, an object of not half so much disgust as the eastern wretches that they tell of. When the Indians were your enemies, you did not send away your powder ; now that they are your friends, send not away nor withhold your charities ; but, bring them together, and direct your friendly aim, as you once did your hostile fire, so that it will *tell*.

How has it been with the Indians of the west and south, and how is it now ? cheated in the treaties that have been made with them, put off with a mess of potage, and urged to present hunger, that the temptation may take ; cheated of their possessions, and driven from their lands, against their will ; cheated out of their wild freedom, without a substitute to get their living by ; savages without their woods, hemmed in by the lots of the planters, with the bow and arrow still in their hands. I am a *friend* of the Indians as Logan was of the white men ; their cause is preferable to every other charity. There should be a department on purpose for them, of high governmental standing. Our fathers, with all their virtues have sinned in more respects than one ; and the very Providence that protected them, has said that He is jealous, visiting their iniquities upon their children, through many generations.

It is sickening to think that the people of this Country will besot their consciences, under this strong call to civilize their own heathen, by sending to a distant land, small and pitiful donations, the spare change from the produce of farms, all of which were wrested from Indians, and some of which are cultivated by slaves.

These remarks, in their full force, have but a partial application here. But the memory of that warlike race, whose land we occupy, associates itself with every continuation of Indian history.

In the perils and sufferings of the French war, in the levies that were raised, and the expeditions that were undertaken, the people here partook in common with the rest of the Colony.

In the war of the Revolution, from the first out-breaking of violence to the return of peace, it contributed its men, to the public requisitions, and to private enterprize, in the naval service, as well as on land. It added to the forces of every campaign, and increased the combatants in almost every battle.

At one time or another the British troops were in possession of Boston, of Newport, of N. York, of Philadelphia, and of Charleston. They tarried but three nights in Connecticut, during the whole of the war; once at N. Haven, once at Danbury, and once at Fairfield. In every battle between

Bunker Hill and York-Town, from the beginning of the war to the end of it, Connecticut was fully and ably represented. Levies, enlistments, and requisitions, and the Naval service drew off much of the effective population to the assistance of other States, and left the residue to defend itself without foreign militia, and without Continental troops, except such as were recruiting to march elsewhere. Gardiner's Bay was often the resort of a strong British force, which a few hours sail could have brought here, and many circumstances conspired to make this port an object of desire. An attempt to take it was at last made, which produced a battle, and ended in what is commonly called the *massacre at Fort Griswold and the burning of New-London*. These events are the special cause of our meeting ; it is proper therefore to be a little minute in stating the particulars of them.

About midnight, between the 5th and 6th of September, 1781, a British fleet of twenty-four sail, principally transports, filled with troops, were attempting their entrance into this harbour. They had been fitted out for this enterprize at New-York, then in the possession of the British, and had lain in silence, the day before, under the shore of Long Island. Their design was to have passed these forts, with the state of which they

were acquainted, in the night : to have landed and accomplished their work of destruction on both sides of the harbour, to have passed to Norwich, and either, to have returned by the way they came, or marched through the country, west, to some place on the Sound, where they might have met their transports, as circumstances should direct them. This object was in part defeated, by the wind failing, or shifting : they were discovered about day break, off the mouth of the harbour. But the discharge of cannon was then so common, that the alarm guns were little noticed. They landed on both sides the Harbour's Mouth, in two divisions, of about eight hundred men each. The landing was not effected till about 9 o'clock in the morning : that on the west shore was made west of the light house, near what we now call the Salt Works ; and it was led, and directed in its further operations, by a Leader who commanded the whole expedition. At this instant, every man's concerns were thick on his hands ; there was shipping in the harbour, and property afloat ; there were women and children, the poor, and the helpless ; and the temptations to burn and to plunder were to be removed.

The division which landed on the West was annoyed and impeded by such means as were at

hand. A strong detachment of it was sent against Fort Trumbull, which was indefensible on the land side; a small redoubt, on Town Hill, was taken, and with the exception of two companies left to keep the possession of these two places, the rest of the division entered the town, which they set fire to in different places; to houses, barns, and detached buildings, as well as to vessels and stores. And they principally consumed it. Nine of our people were killed, and six of the enemy.

Both the Forts were at this time entrusted to the keeping of Colonel WILLIAM LEDYARD, who held his commission under this State, and they were occupied by a few State troops, not enough to keep up and relieve a regular guard, without the occasional aid of volunteers from the citizens.

Immediately, on the appearance of the enemy, their object was perceived, and the probable result foreseen.

Colonel Ledyard made such dispositions for defence on the west side as were practicable.—He visited Fort Trumbull, and left its little garrison, under the command of Captain Adam Shapley, who afterwards died of that day's wounds, with directions to annoy the enemy while practicable, but in case of a formidable prepara-

tion for attack, to cross the harbour, and repair, as they accordingly did, to this, which was the stronger and commanding station.

The prophetic spirit of Colonel Ledyard made certain the heroism of his character. As he shook hands, at parting, with some friends at New-London, while getting into the boat to return to his post, he said to them, without varying from the usual mildness of his manner, " This day I loose my honor or my life ; which it will be, you, who know me, can tell already." His neighbours and friends, as they volunteered around him, proved the sincerity of their patriotism, by the Gospel criterion. " They left father and mother, wife and children, houses and lands," and some of them all these, in the cause of their country.

Including his little guard, which was all that the enemy expected to surprize, he manned his parapets with one hundred and forty-nine men ; who shut themselves out from the possibility of retreat, and nerved themselves for the struggle of man to man.

The enemy had landed below Eastern Point, under Lieut. Col. Eyre, of the 40th regiment of Infantry, Majors Montgomery and Broomfield, Capt. Beckwith, (afterwards Governor of Barbadoes, and since Commander in Chief of the army of Ireland,) and a complement of subordin-

ate officers. They had not been annoyed, or diverted, in their march, and now made their appearance from behind the wood yonder; and were first checked by the redoubt which was near it.

Many around me remember the history of that day; the flag, with the summons to surrender; the onset, the storm, the conflict, the surrender, the barbarous refusal to accept it, for the Fort was surrendered, but the enemy was exasperated at the bravery of its defenders, and dearly did they gain their victory; the agonizing struggle which followed, of death-daring men, penned up in their fastness; cries of suffering, shouts of victory, imprecations of vengeance! there, a burning town, with not a soul to pour upon it a bucket of water; here, a wailing band of wives and children, in the act of becoming widows and orphans.

The stillness of death succeeded—they buried their own dead, with the barbarity that marked their conduct; in heaps, scarcely covered; leaving them to the charity of their enemies for a more decent interment.

Ours, to the number of eighty-one were stripped, and stretched promiscuously on the parade, within the Fort. Such of the wounded as could be easily found, were thrown into a wagon,

which was set in motion down this hill : It struck a tree in its way to the water ; the shock killed some outright, some lingered awhile in agony, and some few survived.

This scene of butchery and bloodshed alarmed even the perpetrators of it ; they determined to destroy the evidences of their cruelty. A train of powder was laid, in the evening, from the magazine to the barracks ; and the barracks were set on fire. This train of powder was accidentally discovered and disturbed ; the fire was extinguished, and the intended explosion prevented. They departed in the dark, and rejoined their companions from the western shore in their transports. Some of their wounded died on the way, and were buried on the shore ; some died on ship board, and were thrown, during the night, into the sea, and washed upon the beach ; and many were buried on Plum Island, to which they repaired. Two hundred and twenty was their estimated loss, besides the wounded and the missing.

Of the one hundred and forty-nine men who garrisoned this place, eighty-one were killed outright, and several died afterwards of their wounds. These, excepting a few who were killed early in fair fight, were *massacred*, after the Fort was surrendered : not shot, but killed with the

sword, the bayonet, and the butt of the musket. But their wounded bodies, their convulsed muscles, and their diminished enemies showed that they had struggled to the last.

During the night which followed, the candle was often held in succession, from face to face, of these dead. The mother with her infant at her bosom, baptised it with her tears, while she went from corpse to corpse, to find the body of her husband. Covered, as in some instances they were, with more than thirty wounds, and expiring only when the last struggling muscle refused to act, they could hardly be recognised by their friends.

They were buried. No spot on earth is more honoured than the grave of a soldier. It is dug in haste, and his body is warm when it is placed in it. Divine Providence has spared to this day a few eyewitnesses of this scene, to swear to the correctness of my narrative ; otherwise the world would not believe it.

Who did this deed ? Eyre was mortally wounded at the beginning of the attack, and died shortly of his wounds. Montgomery was thrust through with a spear as he attempted to pass by a gun, through the embrasure, and was cast dead into the ditch, before the Fort was taken ; and he was afterwards buried by himself within the ar-

row before the gate. Beckwith was well enough for all I know. He was afterwards called on in New-York, by a relative of Ledyard's, who would have avenged his blood ; and he satisfied him that he was personally innocent.

The immediate infamy must rest on Broomfield, whose name and character have never since met the public gaze. It is said that he was afterwards promoted to the rank of a Brigadier, and was employed in the East Indies, where he shot himself through the head with a pistol.

There was a man who surveyed this scene from a corresponding height on the opposite shore.

Of Arnold, if I say a word, I must crave your pardon. Is it worth while to add another curse to his memory ? the world has cursed him, not at once, but in succession. He has been whipped through it naked. The Commander of the American armies cursed him : and the armies that he commanded said Amen ! André cursed him, at the foot of the gallows, in the bitterness of his soul. Asgill cursed him, when he drew that awful blank in the lottery of death. When he joined his friends in England, after the Peace of '83, the multitude retired from about him, not with respect, but with horror. The British

Parliament, so strong were the sensations of our enemies even, was cleared of his presence, when he was accidentally seen in the Gallery, before business could proceed. To the deep damnation of such infamy is it possible to add? He is dead—"The memory of the wicked shall rot."

The event which we now commemorate, was followed, for several years after it, by a dead silence, such as indicated grief, and became it.—During this period, no other procession could have wound its way up this Height, to mark the return of this anniversary, but a funeral train, filled with numbers entitled to the sad, unwelcome precedence of walking next to the bier, as "David went up the ascent of Mount Olivet, and wept as he went up." Feelings of awe, too mournful for a public commemoration, have hitherto withheld the footsteps of this, and the adjoining towns from leading them, at one and the same time, to this spot. But time has passed. The anguish, at first so strong, has subsided into a more extensive, but a gentler feeling. A common impulse has at last brought us together, not to weep; it would be affectation. Those, who died here, had, most of them, attained an age, such, that the addition of forty-four years would have laid them in their graves. "The Fathers are

dead, and the Prophets, do they live forever ?” We do not therefore come to lament the inevitable lot of humanity. “It is appointed unto all men once to die,” and who here shall say that these could have died better ? They were once claimed as the exclusive property of their weeping relatives ; their memories, and their virtues have now become the common property of their country.

We are met neither to laugh nor to cry, for we keep neither a fast nor a festival : we are paying a tribute of respect to the memory of those brave men, who fell here, as patriots, and heroes. If their spirits yet sympathize with the concerns of mortality, they smile with complacency from yonder clouds, at our well meant undertaking.

Say what you will, the world has made up its mind to venerate a hero. It stops for him, to take rank of all other great men. The Martyr, who dies at the stake, for his religion, stands high : but the voluntary victim, who falls in battle, in the cause of his country, stands above him.

Is your object glory ? follow the Statesman through the tedious manœuvres of his diplomacy ; improve upon the acuteness of his mind, and the research of his industry ; follow the pursuit of science, and the invitations of philosophy ; fol-

low the mathematician in his analysis, till the subtle thread of the human intellect threatens to break ; but, is your object glory, and would you obtain it speedily and certainly ? follow Anthony Wayne and storm Stoney Point. I speak of the world as it is. Its opinion is fixed, and I have not come here on an idle mission to reform it.

In this universal admiration, and in the indulgence of this passion for glory, the people of this Country are not behind hand. We unitedly deprecate the horrors of war ; our destiny may be happier than that of becoming a military people : Yet no nation more hates the shame of a defeat, and none is prouder of a well fought battle. Victory is not the criterion. Certain defeat, voluntarily encountered, was the very glory of Leonidas. And seldom has there been an instance since, of greater self devotedness, and desperate fight, than this which we now commemorate. It was in defending the just rights of this country, which Divine Providence had determined to assert, and these men were among the means. It was in protecting from insult and violence, the young, the old, the weak, and the defenceless, of this immediate neighbourhood ; and they were protected. It was in preserving the State from the desolating march, and con-

suming fire of a foreign foe, and it was preserved : It was in support of all your institutions, civil and religious, and in furtherance of your literary establishments, and public donations and charities ; and they have been succeeded and prospered. On the Door Posts of all these institutions, the blood of these men was sprinkled, and the Destroying Angel passed them by.

Is not the call from this spot strong on the Public gratitude ? Let the State, which owes this debt of Honor, to the estates of soldiers, who died in its service, record "*well done*" on some lasting memorial. It need not be smooth with the ornaments of foreign sculpture, nor adorned with the mythology of heathen devices ; it need not rise to the height of a Pyramid, nor be inscribed with any extravagance of praise ; it may be rude as the rocks about us, but let it be permanent as the hill on which we stand.

To it, shall the enthusiast repair in peace, and the soldier in war—here, shall exhausted patriotism be recruited. The flame burnt here, like the bush in Midian, and God grant it be never consumed. Departed bravery shall be honoured here ; the young shall learn the meaning of the inscription, before they can read it. It shall be the perpetual security of this spot from invasion. The bale fire shall be kindled at it, on the first

alarm. It shall garrison this place with men, and the sight of it shall keep them at their posts.

We are met, in the common love of our country and of each other ; honouring the Government over us, of which we are proud, and for which we are grateful, and staunch to the present administration of it. Should any root of bitterness spring up hereafter to trouble us, and alas ! such is the state of man, that it may, let us repair hither ; let us shake hands over the grave of Ledyard, and part in peace.

But we are met, not to build a Monument, or to lay the corner stone of one. At some future time, when, or how, is uncertain, it will no doubt adorn this Headland ; and constitute, in part, the security of this exposed frontier.—We may be little known abroad, and perhaps overlooked at home, but the severe visitations of Divine Providence shew, that we have not been forgotten. The sword, the fire, the pestilence, the hostile attack, the continued blockade, the constant alarm have called us to mutual assistance and sympathy, and should make us the fast friends of one another.

In such hands, whatever structure may be here raised, the keeping of it will be safe. The relatives and decendants of the dead may be presumed to inherit a portion of their spirit, and will defend the sepulchres of their fathers.

Never again, it may be fairly predicted, never again will this spot be invaded with success. We owe this assurance to THE DEAD DEFENDERS OF THIS PLACE.

Yonder are their graves—peace to their memories !



